

Heroes of Water Rescue Award

Overview of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Heroes of Water Rescue Award

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's Heroes of Water Rescue Award was created in 2011 to recognize the contributions made to the Commonwealth by individuals who make a significant, lasting and continuous impact in the field of water rescue as a result of the guidelines established by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Water Rescue Program. The award is not intended as recognition of heroism only, but acknowledges individuals who have utilized the PA Water Rescue Program for lifesaving, increased awareness about the need for swiftwater and flood rescue training, promoted training standards of certification, and inspired other agencies to embrace the PA Water Rescue Program. Due to the stringent criteria for selection, it is anticipated that the Heroes of Water Rescue Award will be seldom awarded.

In order to be nominated for the Heroes of Water Rescue Award, individuals must meet a variety of eligibility criteria. Nominations will undergo a rigorously competitive selection process conducted by a panel of PFBC staff, PA Water Rescue Instructor Trainers and a Water Rescue organization.

The criteria for award selection are designed to reflect the consensus of the panel regarding what constitutes receiving the Heroes of Water Rescue Award. The criteria focus on all areas of the Commission's Water Rescue Program. Individuals selected for receiving the award will be recognized at the April Commission meeting and memorialized by adding his or her name to the Heroes of Water Rescue plaque displayed in the lobby of the PA Fish and Boat Commission Headquarters Building.

Timeline

- Call for nominations – November 1
- Close of nominations – December 1
- Selection by committee - December 30
- Award presentation – April Commission meeting.

Selection Criteria

- The Nominee must have been involved with the Pennsylvania Water Rescue Program for a minimum of five years.
- The Nominee is recognized by his or her peers as contributing above and beyond median performance.
- The Nominee has made significant contributions to the Commonwealth by making an impact in the field of water rescue as a result of the guidelines established through the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Water Rescue Program.
- The Nominee has attained performance that has reflected positively on the Commission and received significant accolades.
- The Nominee reflects a high standard of integrity, safety, training, equipment, preparedness and dedication in relationship to available resources, utilizing them to conduct rescues of persons and/or animals in distress.

- The Nominee espouses the Commission's mission and communicates its importance in their community.
- The Nominee must be an individual and not an organization. Personal and professional affiliations with water rescue and/or emergency response organizations will be considered as part of the application evaluation process.
- Current employees, Commissioners, and Boating Advisory Board members of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission are eligible for this award.
- The Nominee does not need to be a Pennsylvania Resident. Non-residents are eligible.
- The Heroes of Water Rescue will be awarded only once per individual. Past award recipients will not be considered for nomination.

Application

The Commission will open the nomination process on November 1. Employees, certified water rescue instructors and volunteers of the Commission shall submit nominations to the PA Fish & Boat Commission, Attn: Heroes of Water Rescue Award, PO Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000. Nominations will be compiled and coordinated for review by the Boating & Watercraft Safety Manager. Nominations will not be considered if submitted after the deadline.

The nominations must include the following:

- The name of the award (Heroes of Water Rescue).
- Name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address (if applicable) of the nominee and the person submitting the nomination.
- Brief biographical information of the nominee. (No more than 2 pages).
- Description of the nominee's qualifications for the award. (Refer to Selection Criteria.)
- Specific accomplishments of the nominee.
- Past recognitions the nominee has received.
- Affiliations of the nominee.
- Additional information to support the nomination.

Evaluation of Applications

The evaluation panel shall be established by the Boating & Watercraft Safety Manager or designee and shall consist of at least one staff from the Bureau of Law Enforcement, and at least one PA Water Rescue Instructor Trainer and a Water Rescue organization recognized by the Volunteer Rescue Service Recognition Program. Evaluators will individually read and rank the qualifying applications. The Boating & Watercraft Safety Manager or designee will make the final determination. However, if the panel determines that no application meets the stringent criteria no award will be presented that year.

Announcement to Media and Presentation of Awards

When the panel has decided to award a recipient the Heroes of Water Rescue Award, the presentation of the award will be at April Commission meeting and will be announced by the Commission President or designee. The award recipient's name will be added to the award plaque on display in the Commission's lobby and the recipient will receive a Heroes of Water Rescue Award certificate. This may be followed by a statewide press release.